



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 7, 2024

**TO:** Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Education

**FROM:** Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT: Measure:** H.B. No. 2535 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO CHILD CARE  
**Hearing Date:** Thursday, February 8, 2024  
**Time:** 2:00 pm  
**Location:** Conference Room 309

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support Intent**

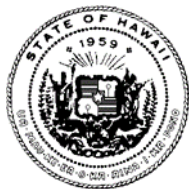
The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) supports the intent of H.B. No. 2535 H.D. 1 and defers to the Department of Human Services regarding implementation.

EOEL is committed to working collaboratively across sectors to expand access to high quality early learning for all keiki across the State. Supporting the sustenance of community-based child care programs will be critical for the State to reach its goals by ensuring families continue to have adequate early learning options that meet their unique needs.

This measure would increase a consistent supply of child care for families receiving subsidies while incentivizing the continuation of providing these services to young keiki through a mechanism that is more financially-sustainable for childcare businesses.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to support increasing access to quality early learning programs and services and the workforce in the State. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 7, 2024

TO: The Honorable Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
House Committee on Education

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2535 HD1 – RELATING TO CHILD CARE.**

Hearing: Thursday, February 8, 2024, 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 309, State Capitol & Video Conference

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and provides comments. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation in this measure not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget.

**PURPOSE:** This bill establishes a child care classroom contracts pilot program to require the Department of Human Services to contract directly with child care center providers in licensed infant and toddler child care centers and group child care centers that meet certain criteria. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds for a position to support the pilot program. Sunsets the pilot program on 6/30/2027. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1). The HD1 amended this measure by:

- 1) Extending the date by which DHS must establish and implement the Child Care Classroom Contract Pilot Program to July 1, 2025;
- 2) Specifying that DHS shall contract directly with child care center providers that serve children six weeks to five years old and families who are eligible for federally funded child care subsidies;
- 3) Amending the length of the contracts with child care center providers to a minimum of twelve months, with an option to extend for the length of the pilot program;
- 4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and

- 5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

DHS can use contracts for direct service slots and is consulting with federal advisors about how the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) may be used to increase the supply of care and quality of care and examples and best practices of successful implementations through contracting for direct service slots.

Should this measure progress further, and for planning purposes, DHS requests clarification from the proponents of this measure on the estimated per child cost that a contracted infant and toddler and group child care center would require to provide for a stable source of funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



Date: February 6, 2024

To: House Committee on Education  
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for **HB2535 HD1**, Relating to Child Care

---

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

**ECAS strongly supports HB2535 HD1**, which would establish a two-year pilot program in the Department of Human Services (DHS) to subsidize child care classrooms in licensed infant and toddler and group child care settings via contracts.

Hawaii faces significant unmet need for child care. There is sufficient capacity for less than 20% of children birth-5 years old in regulated child care settings, and lack of openings and long waiting lists are chronic issues for families searching for care. These capacity issues can be even more problematic for families eligible for and/or receiving child care subsidy assistance, whose financial constraints may severely limit their options to search and wait for care.

Compounding the problem are systemic disincentives for child care providers to participate in the child care subsidy system, which further decrease low-income working families' access to quality child care settings. Specifically, unstable and unpredictable enrollment and attendance of children, as well as insufficient payment rates to cover the cost of quality care can deter providers from serving subsidy children and undermine the financial stability and operating capacity of those providers who do.

Direct contracts for subsidized classrooms between DHS and infant/toddler and group child care centers, as proposed by **HB2535**, would facilitate more predictable, robust and stable payments to child care providers. The increased financial stability for child care providers provided by contracts would support their ability to staff their programs, stay in business, provide higher quality services, and potentially open up more spaces for children.

**With our support for HB2535 HD1, we also respectfully request the committee consider the following amendment to expand funding-stream options to support implementation:**

SECTION 2. (a) The department of human services shall establish and implement a child care classroom contracts pilot program no later than January 1, 2025.

(b) The department of human services shall contract directly with licensed infant and toddler and group child care center providers that serve:

- (1) Children six weeks to five years of age; and
- (2) Families who are eligible for a ~~federally funded~~ child care subsidy through the the department of human services.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB2535 HD1**. With the limited availability of quality, affordable child care options for our keiki, the bill's proposal to stabilize and support the financial viability and operating capacity of our child care programs and incentivize their participation in the subsidy system is key to sustaining and increasing access to the child care families need to survive and thrive.



Committee on Education  
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

February 8, 2024

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

We support HB 2535 HD1, which establishes a child care classroom contracts pilot program to require the Department of Human Services to contract directly with child care center providers in licensed infant and toddler child care centers and group child care centers that meet certain criteria.

We must support our early learning child care providers. Establishing a program where the Department of Human Services contracts directly with child care providers will allow for stability in both infant and toddler and group child care settings. This pilot is a first step to establish a mechanism to support early learning providers directly.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support for this measure represents at least a 75% consensus of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director



Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

Atherton YMCA

Education Institute of Hawai'i

\*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

\*HawaiiKidsCAN

\*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

\*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and  
Economic Justice

\*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

\*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

\* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

\*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

\*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

\*Parents and Children Together

\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Special Education Provider Alliance

\*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

\* Youth Service Hawai'i

*Voting Members (\*) Voting member  
organizations vote on action items while  
individual and non-voting participants may  
collaborate on all efforts within the*



**Parents And  
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS  
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2535 HD1**

**TO:** Chair Woodson, Vice-Chair La Chica & Members, House Committee on Education  
**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO  
**DATE:** February 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM

**Parents and Children Together (PACT) supports HB 2535 HD1 Relating to Child Care**, which will increase the ability of families to access quality care at infant and toddler centers and group care centers. This bill would establish a child care classroom contracts pilot program in the Department of Human Services. This will provide two important improvements for families with young children by increasing the availability of childcare for families receiving subsidies and incentivizing child care providers to continue in the field.

Implementing a program in which DHS directly contracts for classrooms with child care providers ensures financial stability for the provider, even when a child leaves the program unexpectedly. This approach allows providers to retain seats for children with subsidies. This pilot program will incentivize providers to continue caring for infants and toddlers, which is in high demand in our state. It can help families receiving subsidies to find care immediately so they can remain employed or be able to attend school or job training that allows them to increase their skills and earning potential.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.

**LATE**

To: House Committee on Education  
Re: HB2535 HD1, Relating to Child Care  
Thursday, February 8, 2024; 2pm  
State Capitol room 309 and via videoconference

**Strong support for HB2535 HD1, relating to child care**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and committee members:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in STRONG SUPPORT of House Bill 2535 HD1, relating to child care.

Families looking for birth to five care in Hawai'i often face months of waitlists and disappointed calls that child care providers near them will not have room for their young keiki anytime soon. If this family is lucky, they will be able to make alternative arrangements until their child can get into care. However, for many families in our state, a lack of care often means an adult in the home cannot go to work or school.

Child care is not just expensive for families; it's also expensive to provide. All of these circumstances combine to make a perfect storm where families have difficulty finding available care and providers struggle to increase their capacity and meet the demand. This measure is an **important pilot to test a new way to increase our child care supply**. If successful, this model would provide the mechanism for the state to support and grow community-based child care and preschool programs.

Mahalo,  
Deborah Zysman, MPH  
Executive Director





TO:

Rep. Justin Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

FROM:

Brenda Watanabe, VP Public Policy, HIAEYC Board

SUBJECT: Measure: HB2535 – RELATING TO CHILD CARE

Hearing Date: February 8, 2024

Time: 2:00pm

---

The mission of the Hawai'i Association for the Education of Young Children (HiAEYC) is to promote, support, and expand quality and professionalism in early childhood programs and services for Hawai'i's young children (birth to age 8) and their families. HiAEYC is the Hawai'i affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

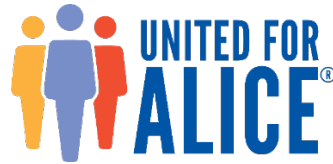
HiAEYC strongly supports HB 2535 and its intent to expand childcare access for families receiving subsidies and to stabilize child care programs through the implementation of a classroom contracts pilot program. The demand for childcare far exceeds the availability of quality programs. Families receiving childcare subsidies immediately need a program to place their children so families may participate in activities that impact their financial stability and earning potential. Shortage of childcare access compounds the stress on families who already are experiencing financial constraints. Having childcare available through this pilot program is a crucial support to families receiving child care subsidies.

For child care providers, maintaining a consistent income is critical to stabilizing their operations and maintaining program quality. With enrollment and income fluctuations, it can be challenging for providers to meet their program needs or plan for expansion. Establishing a classroom contracts pilot program directly with child care providers will allow for financial stability as well as incentivize those contracted providers to continue services and/or expand capacity. The expansion of infant and toddler programs is especially needed as this population experiences extreme shortages in capacity.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Watanabe".

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Watanabe,  
VP of Public Policy, HIAEYC Board



COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES



BILL HB2535 HD1  
POSITION: SUPPORT

Hearing Date: February 8, 2024

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way supports HB2535 HD1, which is to establish a child care contracts pilot program to develop and implement procedures to subsidize child care in licensed infant and toddler group child care centers.

Implementing a program in which DHS directly contracts for classrooms with child care providers ensures financial stability for the provider, even when a child leaves the program unexpectedly. This approach allows providers to retain seats for children with subsidies. Additionally, this pilot program will incentivize providers to continue caring for infants and toddlers, which is in high demand in our state. Finally, it can help families receiving subsidies to find care immediately so they can remain employed or be able to attend school or job training that allows them to increase their skills and earning potential.

Measures like HB2535 HD1 help to uplift ALICE households into economic stability. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, and refers to households who are employed but whose incomes are not sufficient to meet their basic costs. As daycare costs continue to soar, the weight of this burden disproportionately falls upon ALICE families of diverse racial backgrounds and income levels, exacerbating existing disparities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your action to support ALICE families and the non-profit programs working to improve child care in Hawaii. We urge you to pass HB2535 HD1.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kayla Keehu-Alexander in black ink.

Kayla Keehu- Alexander  
Vice President, Community Impact  
Aloha United Way

Handwritten signature of Suzanne Skjold in blue ink.

Suzanne Skjold  
Chief Operating Officer  
Aloha United Way



Chamber of Commerce **HAWAII**  
*The Voice of Business*

**LATE**

**Testimony to the House Committee on Education**  
**Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 2AM**  
**Conference Room 309 & Videoconference**

**RE: HB2535 HD1 Relating to Child Care**

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports HB2535 HD1**, which establishes a child care pilot program requiring the Department of Human Services to contract directly with child care center providers in licensed infant and toddler child care centers and group child care centers meeting certain criteria.

The Chamber supports the purpose of this bill, to develop and implement procedures to subsidize child care classrooms to improve affordability and conditions to promote child care, and appreciates the clarifying amendments applied to HB2535. To reiterate, limited access to childcare is one of the challenges that our local workforce faces today and a significant reason for Hawaii's overall workforce shortage. Low wages and a high cost of living make it difficult to retain and grow the childcare workforce. This measure, if implemented, would Hawaii's businesses and further their capacity for workforce retention and expansion, creating profound economic benefit to our state now and in the future.

In discussions with our members, increasing the availability of childcare is a high priority. This measure mitigates child care provider business closures and will help to increase the availability of child care providers. needed for the viability of our workforce. Our business community and workforce cannot increase its capacity without such support.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 3:30:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Scott Kidd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:13:33 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Samonte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I **strongly support** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

Raising my daughter has been tough having to piecemeal child care because we know of waitlist or lack quality options. Supporting the increase of access to child care prioritizes families of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ryan S.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:19:32 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krystal Baba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

Birth to five child care is important to me because I worry about the lack of options for child care or exhaust other options knowing about waitlists. My family needs access to child care and for seats to open.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Mahalo,  
Krystal Baba

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:07:21 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I live in Mō'ili'ili. I'm writing in STRONG SUPPORT HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 8:31:24 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leilani Kailiawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and Committe Members,

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2535 HD1 relating to child care. It will increase access to child care for families, provide stability to child care providers, and open up more child care seats.

Birth to five child care is important to me because I have 3 sons who have gone through the child care system and noticed that there were a lot of my friends who wanted their child in programs and there was no seats available.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify

Leilani Kailiawa

Send DataSend Data



**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 4:24:49 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ka'ale'a Kyrstin Hanawahine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Members of the Legislature,**

I am in **strong support of HB2535**, which establishes a child care classroom contracts pilot program. This initiative addresses critical gaps in our current child care system by directly contracting with licensed infant and toddler child care centers and group child care centers meeting specific criteria.

The child care classroom contracts pilot program outlined in HB2535 is a **proactive solution** to the challenges faced by families in accessing affordable, high-quality child care services. By directly contracting with licensed infant and toddler child care centers and group child care centers that meet specific criteria, the Department of Human Services can **ensure that families have access to safe, nurturing environments for their children.**

This program not only expands access to child care but also raises the bar for quality standards. By establishing clear criteria for participating child care centers, HB2535 ensures that children receive developmentally appropriate care and early education that **lays a strong foundation for their future success.**

Furthermore, the requirement for regular reports to the Legislature ensures transparency and accountability in the implementation of the pilot program. I urge you to pass HB2535.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Sincerely,*

**Ka'ale'a Hanawahine**

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 5:33:03 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for hearing HB2535 which would require the DHS to establish a pilot program to contract child care classroom with child care centers. This would increase access to child care for families and open up more child care seats. With there being only one childcare seat available for four children under five and the average childcare expense in Hawai'i being \$1700 per month, the working mothers/families really need help.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 5:43:31 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natasha Amaral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

Birth to five childcare is important to me because **I am a teacher for infants and toddlers. We don't have enough programs to help every child get a headstart on their education. We need more classrooms to serve the children of Hawaii. Some children are on a waitlist for years and eventually age off the list because there is not enough room to take in all of them at a center. Every child should have the opportunity to get to a childcare program as well as give parents the piece of mind knowing that their child is taken care of while they work to support their family in a rising cost economy.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 7:04:31 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 6:28:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marissa Baptista	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

As a Native Hawaiian working mother of 3 children with my husband, a resident of Aliapa'akai (Salt Lake), and a registered voter, I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:06:32 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a senior tutu who has provided child care to my youngest grandson, I implore you to take seriously the problems our young parents face when searching for licensed affordable childcare. The high cost and scarcity of reliable childcare make it very difficult for parents to work to afford housing and raising their children here.

My kids, grandson and I were very blessed to have the living and infant care arrangement we have relied on the past few years but most people don't have that situation where the grandparents are close or that they are physically and financially available to be able to watch the keiki while their parents work.

It really should be much easier and affordable.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:33:48 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
tia pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Putting children with other children is extremely beneficial for their behavior. This also enables others to observe if the child needs assistance. This is also good for families who may need the mom to work.

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 8:42:27 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
tom laidlaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our children's health and wellbeing are critical to our families and communities and deserve the State Legialatures attention and support . I encourage our state government to support the Child Care Classroom Contracts Pilot Program as it looks to have strong potential to support and care for our families and greatly improve the care and education of our children.



**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 9:23:47 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Anela Okalani Fernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I strongly support HB2535 HD1 in relation to childcare. Child care from infant to 5 years old is so important to me! Our keiki deserve quality care. The young years are so crucial for our keiki and they deserve it. We need to have a way to offer quicker access to childcare. Some facilities offer a waitlist for months! Our keiki need us now! Mahalo!

February 6, 2024

To: Representative Justin Woodson, Chair  
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Education

Representative Chris Todd, Chair  
Representative Darius Kila, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Transportation

Subject: **Measure** – HB2535 HD1 RELATING TO CHILD CARE  
**Hearing Date** - Feb. 8, 2024  
**Time** - 2:00 PM  
**Location** - Conference Room 309

**This testimony is in strong support of HB2535 HD1.**

Aloha Chair Woodson and Chair Todd and committee members,

My name is Dr. Terry Lock. I am with the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM) College of Education (COE) and serve as the director of the Hawai‘i Early Childhood Educator Excellence and Equity (ECE<sup>3</sup>) Project.

HB2535 HD1 establishes a child care classroom contracts pilot program in the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop and implement procedures to subsidize child care classrooms in licensed infant and toddler and group child care centers. The bill appropriates funds to implement the child care contracts pilot program. The pilot program will: 1) serve children of families receiving DHS child care subsidies; 2) provide contracts for at least one full classroom at one (1) licensed infant and toddler center per county; 3) provide for contracts for at least one full classroom at two (2) licensed group child care centers per county; 4) Provide contracts with child care providers that last two years.

Contracts are one of the strategies to increase the supply and quality of child care for children, between infants to kindergarten children. Contracts are agreements between the subsidy program (DHS) and child care providers to designate slots for subsidy-eligible children.

Sufficiently funded contracts for direct services are more likely to increase stability for child care providers than child care subsidies. Contracts can help child care providers remain in business, and maintain or increase the supply of child care. For example, an evaluation of an infant and toddler contracted slot pilot in Pennsylvania found that participating programs had greater financial stability than providers solely paid through child care subsidies, increased classroom quality, and more stable enrollment for infants and toddlers receiving child care subsidies. Through contracts, there has been evidence that child care providers had a greater ability to hire and retain qualified staff and establish better coordination between local and state systems.

In conclusion, I urge you to please support SB2535 HD1.

Mahalo for your your leadership and attention to this critical matter.

Dr. Terry Lock

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 6:44:00 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caitlin Kryss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

**I STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

Our private early childcare providers are a critical part of our economy and the instability they face due to economic hardships faced by paying families is driving more and more providers away from the profession. We need to provide direct support to them to increase workforce stability so mothers and fathers can work and contribute to the larger economy. Our private care providers can only accept a small number of children as outlined in DHS rules in order to provide safe, quality care, but this means that when spaces go unfilled, they sometimes have to close, and this volatility directly impacts working families. I live in rural Puna where care providers are few, and when we lose them, we can't work, our family experiences stress, and it impacts our overall well being. This bill could support not only our care providers but many many families and prevent toxic stress from impacting overall family and community health. We are all connected to each other, and our community resilience depends on a strong workforce of early childhood care providers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Caitlin Kryss, wife and working mother of 2 daughters

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 7:28:00 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chris Barzman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

**I STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

## Testimony in Support of Establishing a Child Care Classroom Contract Pilot Program for Licensed Infant and Toddler Care Centers

Honorable Members of the Hawaii Legislative Committee,

I am honored to write to you today in support of the establishment of a Child Care Classroom Contract Pilot Program aimed at providing licensed infant and toddler care centers. As a former HIDOE District Educational Specialist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst, I have witnessed firsthand the critical need for high-quality early childhood education and care, particularly for our youngest learners.

Infancy and toddlerhood are crucial developmental stages, laying the foundation for a child's future success in both academic and socio-emotional realms. However, access to affordable, high-quality childcare remains a significant challenge for many families across our islands.

The proposed pilot program represents a proactive and innovative approach to addressing this pressing issue. By providing financial support through classroom contracts to licensed infant and toddler care centers, we can ensure that more families have access to the quality care and early learning experiences that their children deserve.

Allow me to outline several key benefits and objectives of this pilot program:

1. **Increased Access to Quality Care:** The program will expand access to licensed infant and toddler care centers for families who may otherwise struggle to afford such services. By subsidizing the cost through classroom contracts, we can reduce financial barriers and ensure that more children have access to enriching early learning environments.
2. **Support for Early Childhood Educators:** The program will also provide much-needed support for early childhood educators by offering stable funding to participating care centers. This will enable centers to attract and retain qualified staff, invest in professional development opportunities, and maintain appropriate child-to-staff ratios, all of which are crucial for ensuring high-quality care.
3. **Enhanced School Readiness:** Research consistently demonstrates the importance of early childhood education in promoting school readiness and long-term academic success. By providing infants and toddlers with stimulating learning experiences during their formative years, we can better prepare them for future educational endeavors and help narrow the achievement gap.

4. **Parental Workforce Participation:** Access to affordable, reliable childcare is essential for supporting parental workforce participation, particularly for working mothers. By alleviating the financial burden of child care expenses, the pilot program can empower more parents, especially women, to pursue career opportunities without sacrificing the well-being of their children.
5. **Data-Driven Evaluation and Improvement:** A pilot program allows for careful monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are being invested wisely. By collecting data on participation rates, child outcomes, and parent satisfaction, policymakers can make informed decisions about potential expansion and refinement of the program in the future.

In conclusion, the establishment of a Child Care Classroom Contract Pilot Program represents a significant step forward in our efforts to support early childhood development and strengthen families in our community. I urge you to consider the compelling evidence supporting this initiative and to take decisive action in its favor. Together, we can ensure that every child can thrive from the very beginning of life.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lori de Crinis, BCBA, LBA99

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:30:33 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Paula Yanagi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bill: [HB 2535](#)

Position: IN SUPPORT

Dear Chair Marten, Vice- chair Amato and respected committee members,

Mahalo for hearing HB 2535, I am writing in SUPPORT of HB 2535.

This bill is needed! Passing this bill will allow for stability that is needed in the infant toddler and group child care center! It will increase access for families, allowing their keiki to attend quality Early Childhood Programs, in turn allowing families to continue working in the workforce, helping the community all around!

Mahalo,

Paula Yanagi

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 9:46:57 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raya Esteban	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and committee members,

Please support **HB 2535**, which would increase the ability of families receiving Child Care Subsidies to access quality care at infant and toddler centers and group care centers. This bill would establish a child care classroom contracts pilot program in the Department of Human Services (DHS). This measure can provide two important impacts for the child care sector: 1) increase a consistent supply of child care for families receiving subsidies while 2) incentivizing child care providers to continue caring for our young keiki.

As a previous early childhood educator, I deeply understand the importance of children having warm, stable, and nurturing relationships with at least one adult caregiver. Greater financial stability for child care providers through contracts means that they are able to remain open, provide higher quality services, and potentially open up more spaces for children. Since providers face less of a risk of shutting down, children are able to stay in the programs they initially enrolled in and have the same early childhood educator. Having the same early childhood educator paired with a child encourages continuity of care, which has proven to have many benefits for children. Because I was able to stay as an assistant and eventually become a lead teacher in my early education program, I can personally attest that my relationship with the kids and their families deepened, allowing me to better address their individual needs. Furthermore, because I stayed throughout the school year, I was able to gain the trust of my children, which is especially important for those kids who have experienced frequent abandonment. Also, I was better equipped to work closely with the families and their children as they transitioned into preschool.

Again, implementing a program in which DHS directly contracts for classrooms with child care providers ensures financial stability for the provider, even when a child leaves the program unexpectedly. This approach allows providers to retain seats for children with subsidies. Additionally, this pilot program will incentivize providers to continue caring for infants and toddlers, which is in high demand in our state. Finally, it can help families receiving subsidies to find care immediately so they can remain employed or be able to attend school or job training that allows them to increase their skills and earning potential.

Please support this measure.



Mahalo,

Raya Esteban

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:35:35 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jozette Momoa-Smythe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of HB2535.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Jozette MS

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 10:40:16 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2535 HD1 relating to child care.

From the parental point of view, the security of knowing that your child(ren) will be consistently cared for in a healthy, nurturing environment is critical. Some families have grandparents at home or living close by, who can provide this nurturing.

However, not all parents have this kind of grandparent available. So establishing a childcare classroom infrastructure within the school system is a very forward-looking step. Dependable, consistent childcare frees the adult to focus on performing the work necessary to support their family. In Hawai‘i’s present economy, holding a steady job is essential.

From the child’s perspective, a consistent location with a consistent staff of caregivers is very comforting. Very young children especially may be anxious and fearful of going to a setting outside of the family home, and have difficulty separating from the parent. Over the course of the first days and weeks, the familiarity of the childcare setting will lead to their trusting the staff and location.

I urge you to pass HB2535, to wisely and effectively provide for the future childcare needs of a generation of parents who are already faced with economic stress.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Ho, Nu‘uanu

To: Committee on Education  
Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair  
Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair  
Date: Thursday, February 8, 2024  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Place: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
Conference Room 309  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Bill: [HB 2535 HD 1](#) Relating to Childcare  
Position: **IN SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice- chair La Chica and respected committee members,

Thank you for hearing HB 2535 HD1. I am writing in **strong SUPPORT of HB 2535 HD1.**

HB 2535 HD 1 allows the dept of human services to enter into contracts with childcare provider programs. As written, this bill will allow for 1 infant toddler program and 2 group child care center contracts to be created per county. Classroom contracts allows for increased stability in childcare programs and increased access to quality programs for families.

This contract structure is not new and has long been used by Headstart and Early Headstart programs both locally and nationally. Through the ongoing use of Headstart contracts as well as the data collected from research and pilots, The federal Dept of Human Services has concluded that contracts, when “well funded are an effective way to increase the supply of childcare services, especially in underserved communities.”

The proposed rule change issued by the federal dept of [Health and Human Services Department](#) on [07/13/2023](#) states that:

“Sufficiently funded grants and contracts for direct services are more likely to increase stability for child care providers than certificates, helping them remain in business, and thereby maintaining or increasing the supply of child care ([p.45029](#)).”

They also found evidence that providers had a greater ability to hire and retain qualified staff and establish better coordination between local and state systems. Finally, they also reported that the higher reimbursement rate paid with the contracts was closer to the true cost of providing care and allowed providers to invest in quality improvements. If the rule changes are approved, lead

agencies would be required to include contracts and grants as a way to increase supply and improve quality of child care services.

Piloting contracted classrooms allows Hawaii to be in closer accordance with the upcoming federal rule changes that aims to increase supply and improve quality in childcare, both points that Hawaii cannot do without.

Please vote **IN FAVOR of HB 2535 HD 1.**

Thank you for your time and service.

Respectfully submitted,

Malia Tsuchiya

**LATE**

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 2:23:24 PM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dena Akiu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **support** HB 2535. Please pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Dena Akiu

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Education and Committee on Transportation  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday February 8, 2024, 2:00pm  
Place: Hawaii State Capitol, CR 309 & Videoconference  
Re: Judith Ann Armstrong supports HB2535HD1 Relating to Child Care

**LATE**

Dear Chairs Rep. Justin H. Woodson and Rep. Chris Todd, Vice Chairs Rep Trish La Chica and Rep. Darius K. Kila and members of the Committee on Education and Committee on Transportation,

I, Judith Ann Armstrong, strongly support HB2535 HD1 Relating to Child Care.

Birth to five child care is important to me because it is critical that children are engaged in learning at as young an age as possible to ensure they have the tools to be successful throughout their education. Early childhood experiences from birth to age 8 affect the development of the brain's architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. A strong foundation helps children develop the skills they need to become well-functioning adults.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB2535HD1.

Sincerely,

Judith Ann Armstrong

**LATE**

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 4:00:38 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristy Arias	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good morning,

I fully support this bill. Children need stability in their life. This bill will allow that to happen.

Mahalo,

Kristy arias



**LATE**

**LATE**

**HB-2535-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 9:37:44 AM

Testimony for EDN on 2/8/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala